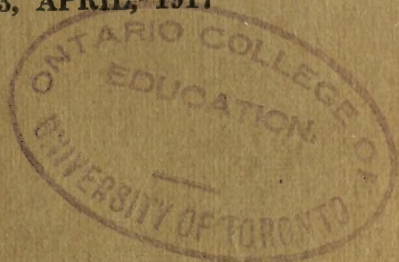


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THE LANGUAGE ISSUE IN CANADA



BY

O. D. SKELTON

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THE LANGUAGE ISSUE IN CANADA

A FEW years ago, a distinguished English visitor, after taking a bird's eye view of Canada, declared that what was wrong with our politics was the lack of problems. We had been so favoured by fortune and our ancestors that all our difficulties of moment were solved, and if our parties and politicians were to be raised out of the ruck of personalities and office seeking, it was necessary to send some representatives to a federal parliament in London, there to grapple with the problems of India and the isles of the sea. Such a plan may or may not be desirable on other grounds, but few would agree today in defending it on these grounds. It would be an airy optimist who would urge that our railway problem, our racial problem, our financial problem, our problem of increasing production, our imperial and international issues, are tasks too small for the abilities of any political leaders we possess or may develop. Rarely have men been called on to face questions that need more careful handling, more thorough investigation, and more courageous solution. The life of our future Premiers will not be an easy one.

The purpose of this article is to present a brief summary of the main facts as to one of these problems, the language issue. The language question is not peculiar to Canada. It is found in almost every country where men of different tongues and of the different racial origins and ways of life which as a rule go with difference in speech, are living in forced or chosen partnership. It is the central, the symbolical issue, where these racial groups clash and contend. It is scarcely necessary to recall the frequency and bitterness of the struggles over language questions which have troubled Europe these many years, and particularly in that modern plain of Shinar, South Eastern Europe. Distinctions of language have been at once cause and effect of the intense sentiment of nationalism which has been one of the sources of the present war. But it is not necessary to go outside the bounds of our own country to realize the grave importance of the question.

We may first note the diversity and proportion of the various language groups in Canada, or rather, since no figures

as to the language spoken are available, of the various racial elements. Until the beginning of this century, practically only two languages were spoken in Canada, English and French. Today French is the mother tongue of slightly over two million Canadians. Though not appreciably recruited by immigration from overseas, Canadians of French descent have increased rapidly, over thirty fold in a century and a half, and by some four hundred thousand, or 25 per cent, in the decade between 1901 and 1911. Yet the proportion they form of the total population has remained almost stationary for many years; in 1881 they were 29.9 per cent; in 1891, 29.0; in 1901, 30.7 and in 1911, 28.5 per cent of the whole. The proportion of Canadians who trace their descent to British forbears is, it may be a surprise to note, barely more than half, and is decreasing. In 1881 Canadians of British descent amounted to 59 per cent of the whole, in 1901 to 57 and in 1911 to 54. It may be observed, also, that the proportion of people of English origin increased by two per cent in the last decade, while the Irish decreased four and the Scotch one per cent. When we note that the immigration in this decade from the United Kingdom, and of people of the British stock from the United States, was well over one million, and yet that the gain in the numbers of British stock at the end was little over 800,000, it is clear, considering the normal increase by birth, that there was a large leakage either of newcomers or of native-born, probably of both.

Turning to the newer Canadians, we find that the immigration authorities list Armenians, Austrians, Belgians, Bukovinians, Bulgarians, Chinese, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, Galicians, Germans, Hebrews of Austrian, German, Polish and Russian origin, Hindus, Hungarians, Icelanders, Italians, Japanese, Norwegians, Poles, Rumanians, Russians, Ruthenians, Servians, Swedes, Syrians, and Turks. Of these much the most important group are the Germans, who in 1911 were about 400,000 in number or 5.5 per cent of the whole population, a slightly smaller fraction than in 1901. The Germans of Western Ontario are descended chiefly from Mennonite settlers who came from Pennsylvania over a century ago; those of Eastern Ontario along the St. Lawrence are chiefly the descendants of German settlers who fought on the British side in the American revolution, while the Lunenburgers of

Nova Scotia were brought in by the British Government in the first years of the founding of the colony. There has, further, been a steady stream of immigrants direct from Germany, Austria, and the Baltic provinces of Russia, while the newcomers from the United States into the west have been perhaps one-fourth of German birth or descent. Next come Austro-Hungarians, classified loosely as Austrians, Hungarians, Bukowinians, Galicians and Ruthenians, constituting in all 130,000 or 1.8 per cent; and the Scandinavians, 107,000 or 1.5 per cent. There were 75,000 of Jewish origin, or at least so listed; 54,000 Dutch, 45,000 Italian, 43,000 "Russian", 33,000 Polish, 27,000 Chinese, and 16,000 negroes. No other racial element exceeded ten thousand in numbers. Just before the war about 25,000 Italians, 25,000 Russians, 18,000 Ruthenians, 10,000 Poles, 10,000 Jews, 5,500 Germans and 5,500 Chinese were entering our shores each year, as against, for example, 9,000 Irish or 29,000 Scotch, or 102,000 English from the United Kingdom. The 107,000 people arriving from the United States in 1913-14 were not classified according to racial origin. There are said to be more Jews in Montreal than in Jerusalem, and the North West is three times more Austro-Hungarian than Indian.

This diversity of racial origin has not, fortunately, meant a corresponding number of language problems. The newcomers vary immensely in racial tenacity, in individual ambition, in the extent to which they have burned their bridges behind them, in the pride they feel in the country of their origin, in their religion and their ecclesiastical shepherding, in their occupations, in the extent to which they settle in the towns or settle in the country, and in their tendency to hive apart in solid colonies or to mingle with the older peoples. Besides English and French, the only languages which show sufficient vitality or whose users are grouped in sufficient strength to count are German, Polish, and Ruthenian. The Greek and the Italian are too much birds of passage, or too much engrossed in city commercial activities and thus anxious to learn English, to give any trouble. Gaelic and Yiddish and the other tongues spoken in the Garden of Eden have not caused any serious difficulty.

This mingling of peoples brings about difficulties, and also opportunities, in many relationships. A complete study of

the question would involve an inquiry into the influence of racial and particularly of language diversity upon social relationships, upon religious life and work, upon trade union organization, upon relations between employers and employed, upon party organizations and methods, and on many other phases of our national life. In the present article, space permits the consideration of only one aspect of the question, the difficulties which have arisen within the field of government activity.

In the working of our federal government no serious problem has arisen. Here there is no question, as yet at least, except of English and French. No other tongue counts sufficient adherents in the Dominion as a whole to have the influence or the consideration sometimes received in provincial areas. The powers which our federal government possesses, to veto any provincial law, and to enforce the rights of provincial religious minorities with reference to education, make it possible to bring any controverted provincial issue before the federal parliament, but the direct contact of the Dominion authorities with education, the battleground of most language disputes, is small.

So far as concerns the relations of English and French in the federal sphere, a very satisfactory arrangement has been reached. It will be recalled that in accordance with Durham's and Sydenham's mistaken ideas of the possibility of rapid assimilation of the French-speaking inhabitants of Canada, the Act of Union in 1841 required that all writs, proclamations, reports, journals and public documents should be written and printed in the English language only, though French might be used in the debates. Four years later the Canadian parliament passed an unanimous address urging the removal of the restrictions on French, and in 1848 that language was put on an equality with English for all parliamentary transactions and records. When Confederation was effected, the same arrangement was continued. Article 133 of the B. N. A. Act provides:

"Either the English or French language may be used by any person in the Debates of the Houses of the Parliament of Canada and of the Houses of the Legislature of Quebec, and both these Languages shall be used in the respective Records and Journals of the Houses; and either of these Languages may be used by any Person or in Pleading or Process in or issuing from any Court of

Canada established under this Act, and in or from all or any of the Courts of Quebec. The Acts of the Parliament of Canada and of the Legislature of Quebec shall be printed and published in both these Languages."

Parliamentary documents, then, are printed in both languages. Parliamentary debates and proceedings in the Supreme and Exchequer courts may be carried on in either language, but it is interesting to note that the very freedom to use French has to some extent taken away the desire to use it; French is hardly ever heard in federal courts, and in parliament much less frequently than thirty years ago.

A significant development occurred when the Naturalization Act was revised by the federal parliament in 1914. For the first time, that act prescribed an educational qualification for all candidates for naturalization. It was considered undesirable to admit to citizenship, and thus almost automatically to the exercise of the franchise, aliens who could not use a language familiar to their fellow-citizens. What was that language to be? Unanimously parliament accepted the proposal of the government that "an adequate knowledge of English or French" should be required.

Passing next to the provinces, we find so much diversity of problems and practice that it is necessary to take them up one by one or in groups. In practically every case the issue is as to the language to be used in the schools, though the question of the language to be used in court or in legislative proceedings is occasionally raised.

To begin with the Maritime Provinces. Here the problem is simplified by the fact that the recent immigrants from eastern and southern Europe, and in fact nearly all recent immigrants, have passed these provinces by. Since the century began, only one immigrant out of twenty-five made the provinces by the sea his home. Only three per cent of New Brunswick's population and four of Nova Scotia's are foreign-born, while British-born are three and eight respectively; "The Island" has only 'a trace' of either, its people being 98.4 per cent Canadian-born. When one contrasts these figures with the 37 per cent foreign-born in Saskatchewan, or the 43 per cent in Alberta, one realizes why it is that the provinces down by the sea have escaped both the rapid economic development

and the serious political problems which have elsewhere followed in the wake of the newcomers. The Maritime Province language situation, then, is simply one between English and French, with Gaelic in the offing. In each of the three provinces there is a large proportion of Acadians, descendants of the early French settlers. In Prince Edward Island they number 13,000, or 14 per cent; in Nova Scotia 50,000, or 11 per cent; and in New Brunswick 100,000, or 28 per cent.

While the language question and the religious question in the schools are legally and technically distinct, the connection in fact is so intimate that it is important to note, first, that there are no separate or denominational schools in any of the three provinces. Following Dr. Tupper's vigorous free school campaign in 1864, all three provinces adopted systems of free, compulsory and non-sectarian education. As a result of the outcry from the Roman Catholics which followed, a compromise was adopted by which religious instruction may be given after school hours, or, in Nova Scotia, during the school hours if none of the parents concerned object. As to language, every child is required to learn English, but in the case of children whose mother tongue is French, instruction in the lower forms is carried on in that tongue. Nova Scotia has adopted the most definite policy upon this matter. In 1902 a Commission was appointed to inquire into the adequacy of the teaching in the schools in Acadian districts. The gist of the Commission's report is found in the following paragraph:

"Your Commissioners find that the fundamental error in dealing with the French schools, which must be held responsible for many of their short-comings, has been the assumption that they must be taught exclusively in English. They find that with startling uniformity and persistency attempts have been made and are being made to educate children from French-speaking homes and with none but French-speaking playmates by means of the English language alone, sometimes from the lips of teachers who can speak nothing but English. They find from the testimony of experts that even were such teachers masters of the most approved modern methods of teaching a foreign language but meagre results could be anticipated from their best efforts under such conditions. They find that with the inexperienced, ill-taught and often otherwise incompetent teachers ordinarily available for employment in such schools the efforts, however conscientious, made to teach the children to speak English are, as might be anticipated, largely a failure. They find also that, while futile attempts to teach them English

are thus being put forth, the general education of French-speaking pupils is being more or less seriously or sometimes even totally neglected."¹

Regulations were adopted in Nova Scotia based in the main on the recommendations of the Commission. A special inspector or visitor (himself an Acadian) is provided for the Acadian schools; brief summer courses are carried on to give French-speaking teachers a mastery of colloquial English; the use of French readers is permitted through the first four grades, or years, during which time the teacher is supposed to be teaching English colloquially so that after the fourth year all instruction can be carried on in English. French is not continued beyond that time in the public or elementary schools as a subject of study, any more than as the medium of instruction. Local trustees are free to employ English-speaking teachers who use nothing but English from the beginning. The other Maritime provinces have worked out somewhat less formally without the framing of any definite regulations a compromise which is substantially the same.

On the whole the Maritime Provinces seem to have solved the difficulty satisfactorily from the educational standpoint. They have also been less troubled by political agitation than the provinces further west. This may be because the population is stationary, not in constant flux and movement as it is elsewhere in Canada, or it may be because the Maritime Provinces are farther away from Montreal than Ontario is.

Next, Quebec. Here we have the most complete adoption of the denominational principle. There are no public or non-denominational schools. There are simply Roman Catholic schools and Protestant schools; Jews are by Quebec law considered Protestants, while other minorities are negligible in numbers and neglected in law. Each set of schools is practically independent, under the control of a Committee of the Council of Public Instruction, composed entirely of members of the corresponding religion. The Protestant minority is at liberty to manage its schools as it pleases, and to teach or decline to teach what it pleases, and so with the Catholic majority. As a matter of choice, nearly all the Protestant schools, being English-speaking, make English the language of instruction

¹See below, Reference 2, page 305.

throughout, but they have long included French as an optional subject of study, and since 1915 it has been a required subject of study from the fourth to the eleventh grade. In a few French Protestant schools French is the language of instruction, with English a subject of study. In the same way the great majority of the Catholic schools, being French-speaking, make French the language of instruction throughout, and include English as a subject of study, beginning it, however, in the first year of school. In a large number of Catholic schools in Irish or English communities, English is the language of instruction and French a subject of study from the first year. The situation is made less difficult by the fact that for the most part the racial elements are locally distinct. In the case of mixed communities of the same religion but of different tongue, no rigid rule or regulation exists. It has been considered that local good sense will generally prove sufficient to overcome any difficulty; if not, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, according to a circular issued in August, 1914, stands ready to withdraw the government grant if "justice is not done to the minority, whether English-speaking or French-speaking." The task of doing justice is facilitated by the fact that a local board, rural or urban, may have twenty or more schools under its jurisdiction. The pupils are distributed among different schools in the same municipality, or bilingual teachers are engaged. In Sherbrooke and Montreal there are some Roman Catholic schools in which one language is used as the language of instruction in the morning and the other in the afternoon. In the Catholic classical and commercial colleges, a very thorough training in English is usually provided, and it from these schools that the provincial leaders have obtained their command of English. The teaching of French in the Protestant secondary schools has recently been made more thorough.

We now come to Ontario. In 1911, out of 2,500,000 people, some 202,000 were of French descent and 192,000 of German; no other non-English nationality was represented to any notable extent, the Dutch numbering 35,000, the Jews 27,000, and the Italians 21,000. The French-speaking citizens are found chiefly in the Ottawa valley, along the Detroit River where Du Lhut and La Motte were pioneers two centuries ago, and in New Ontario, where they are rapidly becoming the majority. The German stock is found to some extent in Renfrew and

Dundas counties, but chiefly in the belt of rich farming and manufacturing country extending across western Ontario from Welland to the Huron peninsula, with Kitchener as the centre.

In Ontario we have adopted the denominational basis of schools in a measure, more so than the western provinces, less so than Quebec. The Roman Catholic minority have the right to set up separate schools, supported out of their own taxes, and to be exempt from the taxes levied for the public schools. In several ways, however, they have less independent control than the Protestant minority in Quebec. In the first place, it is only in the elementary schools that the privileges of exemption are accorded, since in secondary education none but the public or non-denominational schools, the high schools and collegiate institutes, receive grants from the government, and all ratepayers are taxed for their support. In the second place, the curriculum, inspection and final examinations of the separate elementary schools are under the control of the Department of Education, and therefore in last resort, of the Protestant majority, just as in the case of the public schools. As in Quebec, the denominational, as distinct from the language rights enjoyed by the minority, are protected by constitutional guarantees.

In the schools, public and separate alike, certain privileges have been granted or established as to the use of the language of the minority. In the early days of the province much greater latitude was allowed than now prevails. There was little central organization or control of education, and if schools were established at all, in French or German communities, they were allowed to use their own tongue almost exclusively. The first official regulation on the question appears to have been passed in 1851, when on the application of an old country Frenchman who did not know a word of English, to be authorized to teach in an Essex school, the Board of Public Instruction declared that in French or German communities a knowledge of French or German grammar would be accepted in lieu of English grammar. This rule was confirmed in 1858 and again in 1871. The attitude of the provincial authorities is indicated in two letters of Egerton Ryerson, founder of the Ontario school system, and then Chief Superintendent. In the first, written in 1856, the Superintendent declined to interfere when an inspector raised the question whether French books of

strongly sectarian character were to be used in public schools: "As there is no list of books prescribed or recommended for French schools and as it may be presumed that the pupils attending them are for the most part or altogether Roman Catholics, I do not see that we can do anything in regard to the kind of books which are used in the few schools of French people in Upper Canada."² In the second he declares: "... That as the French is the recognized language of the country as well as the English, it is quite proper and lawful for the trustees to allow both languages to be taught in their schools to children whose parents may desire them to learn both".

Thus left pretty much to themselves, these schools achieved varying success. In the German sections the development is well summarized in the report of a Provincial Commission in 1889: "For a number of years many of these schools were conducted entirely in the German language. As the surrounding districts became occupied by English-speaking people, the German language gradually gave way to the English, so that now the schools, though attended by German children and making some use of German, are practically English schools and the German language is no longer used as the medium of instruction in any of them, except so far as may be necessary to give explanations to those pupils who on coming to school, know but little English. The transition from German to English which has been going on for many years is facilitated by the similarity between the two languages, and by the fact that the German settlements are limited in extent and surrounded by English-speaking people."³ In the case of the German sections, then, the *laissez faire* policy was justified, and the people turned to English probably more quickly than if compulsion had been tried.

In the French communities, neither general efficiency nor the acquirement of English advanced at all as rapidly. These communities were much more isolated from English neighbors than the German sections in the heart of western Ontario, and naturally the nearness of Quebec as a great centre and support of the French language and the memory of the part played by the French in the founding of this country made the reten-

²Reference 4, p. 22.

³*Ibid.*, p. 111.

tion of French more desired and more feasible than the retention of German. In many cases these communities lay in the less fertile and less developed sections of the province, and poverty as well as isolation hampered progress. Writing in 1882 Inspector J. F. White thus summed up the situation: "In several places in Essex and in the counties adjacent to the Ottawa, French is the language of the people and of the schools. Though the attention paid to their own tongue is highly praiseworthy, and the progress made therein very fair, it is much to be regretted that English, the great language of the country, is so frequently neglected. In some of the places in Eastern Ontario, it is quite unknown to teachers or pupils. This necessitates the carrying out in French of the examination of the classes and of the whole work of inspection."⁵

It was shortly after this time that the language question first came into politics and received public attention. The crisis was precipitated by the steady incursion of habitants from Quebec into the border counties of Eastern Ontario. It is interesting, in view of the situation today in Northern Ontario, to note that it was on the low swamp lands passed over by the early English-speaking settlers, that these French-Canadian farmers or lumberjacks first settled, unequalled axemen, and possessed of a patience, an industry and a content with small gains which eminently fitted them for the tasks of pioneer life in a land of swamp or muskeg. By 1881 over half the population of Prescott and Russell were French-speaking. English-speaking farmers, left in the minority, moved to the west. In the transition, naturally much friction and hard feeling developed.

The government, in which Oliver Mowat was premier and G. W. Ross Minister of Education, now decided to tighten up the regulations. In 1885 a knowledge of English was required from all candidates for a teacher's certificate, and it was provided that "in French and German schools the authorized Readers should be used in addition to any text-books in either of the languages aforesaid." Four years later a Commission of inquiry was appointed. The Commissioners reported that in every school in the French-speaking districts some English was taught, that in most cases there was not sufficient use of

⁵Ibid., p. 119.

colloquial methods, and that in seventeen schools the results were very satisfactory, in twenty-one fair, while in eighteen the pupils knew very little English. They recommended bilingual readers, institutes for aiding teachers already employed, and a special school for training new French teachers in English.

The government took immediate action. It adopted all the recommendations of the commissioners. In addition, instructions were issued, Oct. 18, 1889, to "all teachers and trustees in schools where French or German is taught." One clause provided that English should be the language of instruction and communication, "except so far as this is impracticable by reason of the pupil not understanding English." Another provided that in the first and second form (the first four years of school), colloquial exercises should be held and the pupil taught to learn to read in French and English: "when the pupil enters the Third Form his knowledge of English should be sufficient to enable him to use all the English textbooks authorized. . ." "It shall be the duty of the inspector," the circular continued, "to see . . . that the study of French or German does not encroach upon the time necessary to acquire a thorough knowledge of English." Certain French readers and grammars were prescribed for use if desired, a provision generalized two years later in a regulation that in school sections where the French or German language prevailed, the trustees, with the approval of the inspector, might require instruction to be given the children of such parents as desired it in French or German reading, grammar, and composition. It will be seen that these instructions anticipate in substance Regulation No. 17, of later days, though less stringent.⁶

The same commissioners, reappointed in 1893, reported that in Prescott and Russell decided advance had been attained. Then for many years the question slumbered. When it did revive, it was because of friction not between French Catholic and English Protestant, but between French Catholic and Irish Catholic. There had been a steady growth of the French-Canadian element, partly by birth and partly by immigration from Quebec, but the movement had not attained sufficient proportions to explain the conflict: in 1901 the French-Canad-

⁶Ibid., p. 105.

ian element formed 7.3 per cent of the population of Ontario and in 1911 8 per cent,—not cyclonic advance. The storm-centre was Ottawa, where Quebec and Ontario met; both in the separate school board and in the University of Ottawa friction between French and Irish Catholic was almost constant. About 1904 Father Fallon was practically forced out of the University. Six years later, when made Bishop of London, the diocese in which lay the French-speaking communities of Kent and Essex, his time came. In a famous letter to Mr. Hanna, Bishop Fallon declared that the bilingual schools in Essex were deplorably inferior, and that the children left them in a condition of crass ignorance of both English and French. Mr. Hanna forwarded the information to Dr. Pyne, Minister of Education; this communication was abstracted and made public, and the fat was in the fire. The instant flame of discussion made it necessary for the government to take action and Dr. Merchant was appointed to make an inquiry into the English-French schools of the province.

Dr. Merchant made a prolonged and careful investigation. His report, which appeared in February, 1912, stated that English was a subject of study in every school visited, but that it was taught with very different degrees of efficiency. Roughly speaking, his investigations showed that in Kent and Essex, in Stormont and Glengarry, and in the public schools of Prescott and Russell, a "moderately comprehensive and free working knowledge of English in speaking, in reading and in written composition" was being attained by children who left school from the third or fourth form in, say, two-thirds of the schools. In Russell and Ottawa, in the separate schools of Prescott, and in the public schools in the districts, the percentage of passable schools ranged between ten and thirty. Dr. Merchant, after referring to the excellent discipline of the schools and the politeness of the pupils, concluded, referring to general proficiency as well as to instruction in English, that while in many schools excellent work was being done, on the whole the English-French schools were lacking in efficiency, and that a large proportion of the children in the communities concerned left school with inadequate equipment to meet the demands of life.

Following this report, in June, 1912, the famous Regulation No. 17 was issued. It was stated to apply only to certain

schools, designated each year as English-French schools. In these schools French was permitted as the language of instruction, but only in the first form, that is, during the first two years of school; for the coming year only it might be used in higher forms where the children did not understand English. In schools "where French had hitherto been a subject of study," the board might provide for instruction in French reading, grammar and composition in Forms I to IV, for those children whose parents desired it, and conditional on not interfering with the adequacy of the instruction in English. The time given to this work should not exceed an hour a day in each class-room. A more rigid system of inspection was provided, with two inspectors for each of three divisions, with a Supervising Inspector,—English-speaking—practically controlling his French-speaking colleague in each division.

The new regulation was vigorously attacked. Some newspapers insisted that it did not go far enough and called for the complete abolition of French from the schools. The French-Canadian Educational Association denounced it as insulting and tyrannical. In 1913, as a result of a report from the six inspectors of bilingual schools, some modification was made in Regulation 17; the inspectors, English and French, were put on an equal footing, under a Chief Inspector, who was also given power to permit the use of French as the language of instruction beyond Form I, if he considered this advisable. These changes did not bring compliance. In school after school the children walked out as the inspector walked in. In 1915 some hundred and fifty schools outside of Ottawa had refused to accept the regulation and had forfeited the provincial grant. The situation became particularly acute in Ottawa, where the majority of the Separate School Board defied the Department of Education. Organized strikes by the children, the cutting off the provincial grant, injunctions to prevent the Board from obtaining funds, teachers unpaid, schools closed, the appointment by the Ontario legislature of a Commission to take control of the Ottawa separate schools, were some of the features of a long and tangled struggle. In November, 1916, the legal issues at stake reached the Privy Council. It held, first, that Regulation 17, or rather the confirming statute, was within the constitutional competence of the province to enact, since, in brief, it was religious and not

language rights which were guaranteed the minority by clause 93 of the British North America Act, and second, that the act setting up a provincial commission in place of the school board did violate the rights so guaranteed, and was *ultra vires*. The decision appeared to open the way for settlement, the more so since a papal encyclical which appeared at the same time strongly counselled peace and submission to state authority. In the spring of 1917, however, there were said to be still nearly one hundred and sixty schools which were not observing the regulation, and which had forfeited the provincial grant, out of some three or four hundred English-French schools in the province. The government, supported by all but five French-speaking members, took power again to set up a Commission in control of the Ottawa schools, if need arose.

In Quebec, English as well as French is recognized as an official language. The clause of the B. N. A. Act already cited makes it permissible to use either language in the debates of the legislature, and obligatory to use both in printing the records, journals and statutes. In the Maritime Provinces and in Ontario there is no corresponding authority for the use of French, in legislature or court procedure. The practice which prevailed in the old province of Canada before Confederation gives no constitutional warrant for the use of French officially in the Ontario section of that province since.

The western provinces may be surveyed more briefly. They all present a problem seriously complicated by the great racial diversity of the new settlers, by the rapidity of their incoming and by the thinly scattered character of much of the settlement.

Of Manitoba's 455,000 people, in 1911, some 30,000 were of French descent, 35,000 German, 40,000 Ruthenian, 12,000 Polish, 10,000 Jewish, and 6,000 Scandinavian, chiefly Icelanders. The Bible, it is stated, is sold in fifty-eight different dialects in Winnipeg, and probably not sold in several more. The French are mainly the descendants of the early fur traders, reinforced by later settlers from Quebec; at Confederation they were about equal in numbers to those of British descent, but have since been swamped by immigration. The Germans are in part descendants of the Mennonites from Russia, who came out here forty years ago on the invitation of the

Dominion Government, to escape military service, and in part newer comers. The Ruthenians, Poles, and Jews are of the latest immigration tide. Of these groups, the Icelanders and Jews have given no trouble as to language; they have been keen to learn English, and have attained marked success. The other communities, which have settled chiefly in the northern farming areas, have, however, occasioned a serious problem.

In Manitoba there is no legally established Separate School system. The denominational system set up in the early years of the province was abolished by the Greenway-Martin Government in 1890, and a purely non-denominational system, practically the same as the previous Protestant schools, established in its place. We all recall the fierce conflict which followed, and the breakdown of the constitutional guarantees on which the minority had relied. When the Liberals attained power in 1896, largely on a platform of conciliation toward Manitoba, a compromise was effected, by negotiation between the Laurier Government and the Greenway-Sifton Government. Provision was made for religious teaching in the last half hour of the school day, by representatives of any denomination, when requested by parents of a specified minimum of pupils; Catholic teachers were to be employed when the attendance of Catholic children reached twenty-five in rural and forty in urban schools, and the parents so petitioned. In the ordinary work of the school the children were not divided, and the schools remained public in every sense. This settlement was denounced by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and has never been accepted by them as final. In Winnipeg and Brandon the Roman Catholics have maintained separate parochial schools at their own expense, besides paying taxes to the public schools. In the smaller towns and in the country, however, the old separate schools have either been disbanded or are administered as public schools.

In this settlement a language clause was inserted which has lately come to possess much more importance than was anticipated at the time. It was provided that where ten pupils spoke French or any other language than English as their native tongue, bilingual teaching must be provided. The reason for not specifically restricting the privilege to French was to include the Mennonites, who lay much stress on the scrap

of paper given them by the Dominion Government forty years ago, promising liberty in education and religion.* The influx of immigration from Eastern Europe which began about 1902 was not then foreseen. When it did come, confusion followed. Each racial group, often egged on by its ecclesiastical and newspaper leaders, demanded its rights under this clause. In 1915 nearly one-sixth of the schools were bilingual,—143 teaching French, 70 German, and 121 Polish or Ruthenian, as well as English. Practically all of these were in outlying country districts. A school for training French bilingual teachers is maintained at St. Boniface, and a German school at Borden; one of the regular provincial normal schools at Winnipeg gives instruction for Ruthenian teachers, and the other, at Brandon, for the Poles. The refusal of the late government of Manitoba to adopt compulsory education made the situation worse, especially in the Ruthenian communities. In several districts there were more than the minimum of ten children belonging to three different nationalities, and the strife as to which language should be taught by the unfortunate teacher, in the one-room ungraded school, with half a dozen or more classes, was constant and bitter. When the Norris government, which had made the education issue a chief plank in its platform, came into office in 1915, one of its first steps was to repeal the clause making it obligatory to permit bilingual teaching whenever demanded by the parents of ten children. The intention of the Minister of Education, it would seem, is not to put a stop at once to the use of these non-English languages, but to make it a privilege, not a legal right, and to enforce by firm administration the efficient teaching of English everywhere as a first step. It is also, apparently, not the intention to put French in exactly the same position as other non-English languages.

In Manitoba the language issue has not been confined to the schools. It has been raised in connection with court and

*Orders-in-Council and formal letters issued by the Macdonald government, in 1872 and 1873, pledged the following concessions:

1. Entire exemption from military service.
2. A free grant of lands in Manitoba.
3. The privilege of religious schools of their own.
4. The privilege of affirming oaths instead of making oaths in court.
5. Aid in payment of passage, etc.—Sessional Papers, 1873, No. 9, p. xi, seq.

legislative proceedings, though in a much milder form. When the province of Manitoba was formed in 1870, a compromise, based on the federal precedent, was embodied in the Manitoba Act by which the Dominion parliament constituted the province. This clause provided that either French or English might be used in the debates of the legislature or in the Courts of the province, and that both must be used in the legislative records and journals and in printing the statutes. In 1890, when the separate school system was abolished, this provision was also swept away. The Dominion Government refused to disallow the abolishing act, on the ground that it was a matter for the courts to decide. The courts have not been called upon to face it until this past year, when a Winnipeg barrister, son of the late Chief Justice Dubuc, brought an action to test the legality of a prothonotary's action in rejecting a statement of claim on the ground that it was written in French. So far as the debates of the House are concerned, the smallness of the number of the French-speaking members,—who, in the present house, constitute all that is left of the Conservative or Opposition representation, five or six all told—has made it a matter of practical necessity to use English.

Saskatchewan and Alberta are still more polyglot than Manitoba. In Saskatchewan, in 1911, out of 490,000 people, some 68,000 were of German origin, 41,000 of Austro-Hungarian, chiefly Ruthenian origin, 34,000 Scandinavian, 23,000 French, and 18,000 Russian. In Alberta, out of 375,000 people, there were 36,000 of German descent, 28,000 Scandinavian, 26,000 Ruthenian, and 20,000 French.

The North-West Territories, it will be recalled, were formally organized by Dominion act in 1875. Various extensions of home rule were made during the next thirty years, until in 1905 the Autonomy Acts admitted Saskatchewan and Alberta, comprising the settled southern portion of the territories, as full-fledged provinces.

In both provinces a mild form of separate schools exists. In 1884 a thorough-going denominational system, on the Quebec plan, authorized by the federal act of 1875, was introduced, but in 1892 the territorial authorities insisted on modifying this system materially, and it was this modified system which was established by the Autonomy Acts. Under this provision, Catholic or Protestant minorities have the right to establish

separate schools and to be taxed for the support of these schools only. No religious teaching is permitted in these separate schools, except for opening with the Lord's prayer, until the last half hour of school in the afternoon. The course of study, the books, except for the optional use of the Canadian Catholic Readers, the inspection, are uniform for both public and separate schools. In view of the extent and heat of the discussion which has sometimes centred about these schools, it is interesting to note how few separate schools of even this mild type exist: in 1916 there were in Saskatchewan only fourteen Roman Catholic and three Protestant separate school districts out of a total of thirty-seven hundred, and in Alberta nine Catholic and one Protestant school out of some twenty-four hundred districts, with three thousand out of the total ninety thousand pupils enrolled.

As regards the language to be used in the schools, no constitutional limitation or right exists. The Dominion did not make any provision as to the language of the schools either in 1875 or in 1905. The territorial authorities themselves, however, adopted certain measures which are still in force. It was not until 1888 that a primary course in English was made compulsory in all organized schools in the province. In 1892, it was enacted that all schools should be taught in the English language, that both English and French literature might be included in the subjects of study, and that it should be permissible for any school board to cause a primary course to be taught in the French language. A further privilege is embodied in the ordinances of 1901, whereby the board of any district is empowered to employ one or more competent persons to give instruction in languages other than English to the pupils whose parents so desire, on condition that such instruction shall not supersede or in any way interfere with the instruction required by the general regulations, and provided that the cost of such instruction shall be met by a special levy on the parents of the pupils concerned. All these measures are still in force in the two provinces.

In Saskatchewan, as in other western provinces, the question is complicated by the fact that not all the settled territory is organized into school districts. Following good Ontario and democratic practice, it has normally been left to the people of each community to organize themselves, as soon as the

number of children of school age warranted, into either a public or a separate school district, or both. On the whole, wonderful success has been attained in this direction, and there is nothing more promising in the western outlook than the combination of local interest and efficient government leadership in the field of education. Yet difficulties have developed even where schools have been organized in orthodox fashion. The Community Doukhobors decline to send their children to these schools at all, and it is questionable whether it is wise to attempt to compel them to do so, rather than to wait until the disintegrating influences of their Canadian surroundings and example of the Independent Doukhobors who have broken from the old ways and the old leaders produce their inevitable effect. In a few French communities it is claimed that an adequate knowledge of English is not given, but this phase of the issue is of minor importance in Saskatchewan. The Ruthenians are a greater source of difficulty. As is almost inevitable in view of salaries and living conditions, few but Ruthenian teachers are available in such communities, and in spite of the activities of the Ruthenian training-school at Regina, now associated with the Normal School, the bulk of these teachers are but poorly grounded in English and poorly trained in general. In about thirty out of the hundred and fifty schools in the northern part of the province attended by Ruthenian children the last hour or half hour of the day is devoted to Ruthenian as a subject of study, in accordance with the 1901 ordinance cited above. Yet progress is being made. More Ruthenians are becoming regularly qualified, and a number are attending the provincial university. More and more districts are engaging Canadian teachers, sometimes building a teacher's house to overcome the boarding difficulty.

But not all communities are organized. Dr. Oliver, in his recent survey of rural education in the province⁷ showed that many communities had evaded the school law by the simple process of not organizing a district in the way prescribed, or by "deorganizing" later. This practice is found chiefly among the Mennonites of the stricter sort, the Old Colonies, centering chiefly around Hague and Warman, north of Saskatoon, and around Wymark and Blumenhof, south of Swift Current. They

⁷Reference 18.

have established parochial schools, supported by voluntary assessment. In these schools, containing some twelve hundred pupils, Dr. Oliver has claimed that not a single word of English is taught; German is the sole tongue used and the catechism and the Bible, with writing and arithmetic, make up the whole course of study. In some German Catholic communities near Humboldt, with a dozen or fifteen schools, a somewhat better general education is given, and German and English are each taught for half a day. In none of these parochial schools have the provincial inspectors hitherto had any right to enter or any control whatever. A new School Attendance Act has just been passed, however, much on the Alberta model, giving the Department of Education power to investigate these parochial schools and to apply pressure if they are not efficient. The Minister of Education has recently stated that the total number of these schools in the province is only 53.

There has been no province of Canada in which there has been of late so much public discussion of education in the wider sense, and not merely of education in the racial and ecclesiastical relations which sometimes engross attention, as in Saskatchewan. The government has invited suggestions for radical reform of the educational system, and the public response to the invitation has been most helpful. The result, it may be hoped, will be that the improvements needed and promised as to language teaching will come as part of a general educational policy and not merely as the outcome of a racial quarrel, though such friction cannot entirely be avoided.

Alberta has had to face the same problems. A Supervisor of Foreign Schools has been appointed whose duty it is to supervise the organization and management of these schools, and to step in when the local authorities refuse to act. Much opposition has been met, especially from the Ruthenians, many of whom asserted the right to bilingual schools, that is, to the use of Ruthenian as the medium of instruction. This claim has been denied, though in Alberta, as in Saskatchewan, Ruthenian or any other tongue may be taught as a subject of study in the last hour of the day, in accordance with the Territorial regulation of 1901 previously cited. Alberta also has faced its parochial school problem, by insisting on the right to inspect such schools and refusing to recognize attendance at them as fulfilling the compulsory education requirements un-

less a certain standard of efficiency is attained. In the report of the Minister of Education for 1914, the situation is thus summarized: "The organization of the branch of the Department for forcing operation of schools and compelling attendance, is commencing to show results. There has been a gradual but relentless tightening of the pressure in this direction during the last few years." The Chief Inspector reported that a number of German-Lutheran private schools, under charge of theological students from Lutheran colleges in the United States, had been closed because he had declined to give them a certificate of efficiency, and that most of the pupils now attended public schools.

The language to be used in the legislative and court proceedings of these two provinces has never been made a subject of constitutional regulation. It has, however, been the subject of parliamentary action. In 1880 the Dominion parliament prescribed for the Territories the same arrangement as had been adopted in the Dominion and for Manitoba: either English or French might be used in legislative debates and court proceedings, and both must be used in the records, journals and ordinances of the Council or Assembly. Ten years later D'Alton McCarthy began his campaign against French by moving that this privilege be rescinded: an amendment was carried continuing the existing arrangement but giving the Legislative Assembly power, after the succeeding election, to determine for itself what its procedure would be. In 1892 Mr. Haultain succeeded in having a resolution adopted by the Assembly providing that thereafter its proceedings should be recorded and published in English only. Apparently the question of the language of the courts has not been dealt with by law, but practice has thus far given English the sole place.

British Columbia has thus far escaped a language problem or at least any public discussion of it. It has its share of non-English peoples; out of 392,000 inhabitants, besides 20,000 Indians, there were 20,000 Chinese, 16,000 Scandinavians, 11,000 Germans, 9,000 French, 9,000 Italians, 8,000 Japanese, 7,000 Ruthenians and 7,000 Russians, chiefly Doukhobors. Many of these groups, Chinese, Japanese, Italians, have few children; others are scattered throughout English-speaking sections, and are either assimilated to English ways or too weak to make any concerted demand. English is the sole

language of instruction, and no other tongue has a place as subject of study in the lower schools. Of late the Doukhobors who have migrated from Saskatchewan, and who are chiefly of the straiter sect, have been giving some difficulty. There has never been any question of the use of any other language in legislative or court proceedings.

Such, in barest outline, is the language situation in Canada. Some general considerations suggest themselves.

In the first place, the language issue is, in Canada, distinctly a question of elementary education. As such it comes within the constitutional power of each province to determine for itself. Broadly speaking, there are no legal limits to this power. The constitutional protection given to denominational minorities does not extend to language minorities, and the general power of the Dominion to veto provincial laws is not likely, and rightly so, to be exercised in this field. That does not mean that what is done in Saskatchewan is no concern of the Nova Scotian, nor that the Ontario man should refrain from investigating or discussing a Quebec issue. It does not mean that merely provincial considerations are to be taken into account in determining provincial policy; otherwise, it would be hard to find any reason why the Quebec majority, if so minded, should not require every child of the English-speaking minority to learn French. It does mean that the power and responsibility in this issue rest primarily with the people of each province, and that their view of what is just and expedient, and not constitutional restrictions, will guide their action.

Is it just and expedient for the English-speaking majority in eight of our provinces to use their power to require that every child in their bounds should be given an adequate mastery of English? On this point there is very general agreement. Undoubtedly this is not only our power but our duty, alike for the nation's sake and for the child's sake. In any democracy, the foundation of common action, of common ideals and common purpose, is free intercourse and full understanding. In a country like Canada, stretching four thousand miles from sea to sea and hardly, as yet, ever more than a hundred inhabited miles wide, broken by Maine intrusions and Archaean rock wilderness, it is doubly essential that as few language bars as possible be added to the natural bars that

check free intercourse. Without the widest possible knowledge of English no common Canadian consciousness is conceivable. It is equally clear that this training is desirable in the child's own interest. This is and will be overwhelmingly an English-speaking country, still more so an English-speaking continent. Many a door of opportunity will be barred to the child who lacks this key.

Would it be equally just and expedient for the French-speaking majority in Quebec to require every child in the province to learn French? It is difficult to see how any one who asserts the right of any province to decide its language question regardless of its neighbors' opinions could deny this, but, as suggested previously, other than provincial considerations must be taken into account. Neither the argument of national unity nor the argument of individual advantage counts so strongly as in the case of English. Fortunately the question is an academic one. The majority in Quebec has shown an admirable tolerance in this regard, and not even the fieriest Nationalists have proposed to hamper the freedom of the minority to teach what language or what creed it pleases.

The policy of requiring every child in the English-speaking provinces to learn adequately the tongue of the majority being taken as accepted, then, should the language of the minority also be given a place in the school curriculum? So far as the political aspect of this policy is concerned, much depends on the attitude and purpose of the minority in question. If they take up a position of isolation and antagonism, seek to put their fatherland before the land of their adoption, a strong plea can be advanced against any privileges which will but further perpetuate and buttress this attitude. If, however, they put Canada first, and share in common Canadian aspirations, there seems no valid reason, on political grounds alone, for refusing a place in the schools for their mother tongue. We want unity, not a drab, steam-rollered uniformity. The man who forgets the rock out of which he was hewn is no better Canadian for it; to repress old traditions before we have given new ideals is questionable policy. By all means seek to put Canada first in the minds and hearts of every child of Canada by birth or adoption but do so by constructive action, by emphasizing the nation of the future which all share in

common, rather than by repressive action, by forcible suppression of the heritage and memories of the past.

In this connection, it must be recognized that it is not possible to speak of French as being merely on a level with Ruthenian, or German, or Chinese. Quite aside from any general considerations as to the importance of French from a literary or commercial or diplomatic point of view, we can never forget that it was the sons and daughters of old France who first settled our shores, who faced dauntlessly the pioneer tasks and took their full share in laying the foundations of the Canada of today. Nor can we ignore the practical fact that today our fellow-citizens of French descent are two million strong, and will for generations play a leading part in the national life, a life which may be made strong by frank and cordial partnership or marred and broken by discord. The degree of weight to be given such considerations will vary in different provinces, with the degree of historical connection, or of the complication involved by the presence of other language minorities; it is stronger in the case of the Maritime provinces, Ontario and Manitoba, than in the case of the three westernmost provinces.

Again, the practical question of the feasibility of teaching a second language must be taken into account. The additional time required for the study of a second language will doubtless be balanced by the advantage in mental discipline and in equipment for life. Where, however, the minority is only a fractional one, or where, as in many western communities, there are several racial minorities jumbled in a single section, the practical difficulties may quite outweigh any theoretical arguments for giving a place to any or all of these languages in the school work. A place may often be found in secondary schools when it is not practicable in the elementary schools.

To turn more particularly to the situation in Ontario. The great body of moderate opinion among both English-speaking and French-speaking Ontarians appears to follow the lines indicated above: insist upon an adequate training in English for every child in the province, and provide, where it is desired, such training in French as may be found practicable and consistent with progress in English. If this is so, why the heat and controversy of the past few years? Partly because a few men on either side have put forward extreme

demands, on one side for the complete exclusion of French from the schools and on the other for the use of French as the language of instruction throughout; partly because of ignorance of the facts, and still more because of suspicion and misunderstanding as to the ultimate purpose and aim of the opposing party. Many French-speaking Canadians believe that the Government and the majority in Ontario are seeking to oust French entirely, while many English-speaking Canadians believe that the inefficiency in the teaching of English in bilingual schools is proof of a design to oust English.

To take these points in turn. Is there any evidence of an intention on the part of the majority in Ontario to prevent a child learning French, provided he masters English as well? None. The responsible leaders of both parties are on record to the contrary. Any one who follows in detail the course upon this question taken by the Department of Education, under whatever administration, must conclude that it has shown sympathy, patience, and an honest desire to meet the reasonable wishes of the French-speaking minority. Doubtless mistakes have been made, but not more so than in other fields. The establishment of bilingual training schools, the offer to pay part of the expense of teachers in training at these schools, and to aid poor districts in paying the higher salaries demanded by well-trained teachers—an offer, strangely, not yet accepted—are evidences of this sympathetic attitude.

Are there any evidences to the contrary? First, complaint is made of the restriction of French as a subject of study to one hour a day. This does not appear wholly unreasonable, out of five or five and a half hours, in view of the time which must be allotted to subjects such as arithmetic, writing, and geography, which from the literary standpoint are neutral. The six bilingual inspectors, after a year's experience of the first version of Regulation 17, recommended that the teacher's time should be divided equally between three groups of subjects of study, first, English reading, composition and grammar, second, French reading, composition and grammar, and third, arithmetic, history, geography, writing and other subjects. This suggestion was not adopted; instead, the Chief Inspector was empowered to extend the time for French at his option.

In the second place, as to the language of instruction, it is urged that it is harsh and unnecessary to limit the use of French to the first form, that is, the first two or three years, or to make an extension depend solely on the grace of the Chief Inspector. This is a question on which there is wide difference of opinion. At one extreme we find the argument which Dr. Merchant met with from some of the teachers inspected, "for the retention of French as the language of instruction throughout the course, contending that since the child thinks most naturally in the mother tongue he is greatly handicapped in pursuing a course of study when there is placed upon him the added difficulty of acquiring and using a strange language; these teachers would continue English as a subject of study to the end of the course."⁸ This argument has weight, but it does not recognize the actual facts of the situation to be faced. Wherever this method is followed, Dr. Merchant notes, the pupils' attainments in English are unsatisfactory. It requires time, incessant practice and skilled teachers to give a training in English in this way. One or more of these conditions is usually lacking. In a community wholly French-speaking, the children hear little English outside the school room, and the need of the most constant practice there, especially when they leave while in the third or fourth book, is obvious. In mixed communities, there are likely to be English-speaking children attending the school, and while this makes it easier for the French-speaking children to learn English, it brings other complications, especially in a one or two-roomed school, if French is made the language of instruction for all.

At the other pole of opinion it is urged that it is possible to teach a new language adequately without using a word of the child's mother tongue from the day he enters. Dr. Norman Black has given a very forceful exposition of this argument, and has cited much evidence to bear him out.⁹ On the whole, American and Western Canadian opinion and practice appear to run in this direction, though it is not certain whether the policy is not often merely the counsel of necessity, the only course which the teacher's limitations or the variety of

⁸Reference 6, p. 74.

⁹Reference 18a.

languages spoken by the pupils makes possible, rather than a counsel of perfection. A western friend, with wide practical experience, writes: "Teach English from the first. There is no danger of losing French. A language must be learned as young as possible if knowledge is to be facile. The task to do is a big one, therefore, begin at once, especially with irregular attendance and early graduation. The bilingual or translation method goes around two sides of a triangle (the object—chapeau-hat), and therefore is bad, as spoken English must be instantaneous and automatic." To learn English, however, is not the sole object of primary schooling.

The compromise favoured by the Welsh and Nova Scotia authorities (see below), of beginning instruction in the mother tongue, was endorsed by Dr. Merchant: "the best results are obtained when the medium of instruction is in the beginning the mother tongue." The chief argument in favour of this procedure is that otherwise the English words learned become mere parrot phrases, conveying no meaning to the child's mind, and that progress in general subjects and in mental development is much more rapid on the bilingual plan. Whether the two or three years allowed under the Ontario rule for the mastery of English is sufficiently long, is a fair subject for discussion; Nova Scotia grants two more. But to make discussion worth while, the existing rule should first be given a fair trial.

One further point may be noted, which is often cited as proof of hostility to the French language. Regulation 17 provides that French may be taught as a subject of study "in those schools where French has **hitherto** been a subject of study." This is taken to imply an intent to confine the teaching of French strictly to its present limits. The Department of Education officially denies this interpretation.¹⁰ It declares that Regulation 17 does not apply to all bilingual schools, but only to those which have not been teaching English adequately, and which are annually designated for special treatment, as "English-French schools." In the case of schools not on the list, but containing French-speaking pupils, or in the case of new schools organized since the adoption of Regulation 17, the use and study of French are governed by Regulation 12 (2), and Section 84 of the Public School Act, which have been in

¹⁰Reference 12.

force for years and have been supplemented, not replaced, by the new rule.* This seems a fair and reasonable interpretation, but it does not clear up the whole matter. According to this interpretation, there are two classes of schools: first, those in which English has not been adequately taught, and in which, of course, French has been taught, and second, those in which English has been taught adequately, whether French has been studied at all or not. It is only to the first class that Regulation 17 is said to apply. Why, then, use the word 'hitherto' at all in this connection, since, by definition, this class includes only those schools in which French has previously been taught, and taught excessively? Again, is it correct to say that in the second class of schools Regulation 12(2) and Section 84 are the only rules that apply? Would a school that was proved to be teaching English adequately be allowed to use French as the medium of instruction beyond Form I, or as a subject of study for more than an hour a day, without the consent of the Chief Inspector? Possibly the department would reply that this is only a hypothetical case, since under Ontario conditions an adequate command of English cannot be given if this minimum of French is exceeded; why, then, permit it to be exceeded in the other class of schools, even with the Chief Inspector's permission? It is worth noting that in 1913 the six inspectors of bilingual schools unanimously recommended "that an English-French school be defined as follows: An English-French school is a Public or Separate school in which English and French are the languages of instruction and management, or in which English and French are subjects of study in any of the Forms I to IV." This would make the teaching of French and not the adequacy of the teaching of English, the basis of classification. The Privy Council declared that Regulation 17 was "unfortunately couched in obscure language." The official statements show that the intentions of the

*Section 84 provides for public schools (apparently there is no corresponding regulation for separate schools) that English shall be the language of instruction and communication except where it is impracticable by reason of the pupil not understanding English. Regulation 12 (2) provides that in school sections where the French or German language prevails the board may require instruction to be given in French or German reading, grammar and composition to those pupils whose parents so direct, in addition to the regular course of study.

Department are not as restrictive as has been claimed. It would be well to make this clear beyond dispute.

To turn to the other side, there are those who claim that our French-Canadian cousins cherish the idea of driving English from the schools, and point to the charges of inefficient English training in many French-speaking settlements to bear out their contention. It is true that in many schools there is inefficiency, though not so great as is commonly supposed by those who have not read Dr. Merchant's report, or who have no first hand knowledge of the situation, and not so great by any means as existed thirty years ago. But such inefficiency as exists is not wholly or even largely due to any deliberate intention to slight English. True, in some remote districts where the French-Canadian farmers have recently come across the border from Quebec, they have not realized at first the need of English. True, also, that in some of the larger centres a few ecclesiastics, usually recent comers with strong ultramontane notions of the superiority of the church over the state, have encouraged any policy which will lessen the risk of contamination by intercourse with heretics. They are, however, a minority, and, as the recent admirable encyclical of the Pope on the bilingual issue showed, more Catholic than Rome itself. The vast majority of French-Canadians in Ontario are sincerely anxious to give their children a good English training. As Paul Lamarche puts it, "For us, to learn French is a duty, to learn English, a necessity."

What, then, is the explanation of such failure to secure adequate English training as exists? Partly, the inherent difficulty of teaching two languages in single-room schools, partly, the same causes which account for the frequent inefficiency in other subjects than English. Most of the backward schools are in poor or newly-settled districts. The attendance of pupils is irregular, and many, if not a majority, leave school before they have entered or passed through the fourth form. The teachers are a fluctuating body: when, as Dr. Merchant points out, sixty per cent. of the teachers inspected had held their posts for less than one year, what possible hope is there for efficiency under these preposterous conditions? It is difficult, again, to secure trained teachers. Few English elementary teachers know French well enough to teach it, and those who do are not eager to go to the communities in question to

teach for \$300 a year. Relatively few French-Canadian pupils go through the Ontario High Schools, and those who do have better opportunities in business than the bilingual school affords.

These facts make it clear that the question is not merely one of language or race; it is, in part, only one phase of the general educational problem which faces us. Any steps taken to improve our general school system, by enforcing attendance strictly, by raising the age limit, by introducing consolidated schools, by making the township or county rather than the section the unit of administration, by making larger grants to the poorer sections, by making teaching a better paid and more permanent calling, will go far to solve our language difficulties.

In conclusion, two suggestions may be ventured with special reference to the Ontario situation.

In the first place, it is much to be desired that in our secondary schools and colleges a more effective mastery of French could be given. Some 25,000 pupils study French in Ontario higher schools each year; how many can carry on a conversation in French? Of course the difficulties of environment, of lack of practice, are not easily to be surmounted, but a betterment is worth striving for.

In the second place, could not this year, when we are celebrating Confederation and rejoicing in the alliance of Britain and France, be made the occasion for settlement of the bilingual issue? The situation is improving, but it is still deplorable. The provincial authorities claim that if Regulation 17 is given a fair trial, the progress alike in English and in French would surprise the critics. The critics declare that an adequate mastery of French is impossible under the regulations. The issue cannot be determined without trial. Why should not the schools now resisting agree to give the regulation a fair trial, on the understanding that a Commission of impartial, outside educationists will be appointed by the provincial government to study its working, at the end of a definite period or periods? Is there any more practical way in which we can further the national unity we celebrate on July 1?

NOTES ON THE LANGUAGE ISSUE ABROAD.

To supplement the foregoing discussion of the language situation in Canada, it may be of use to note some phases of the same question in other countries, even though limitations of space and knowledge compel brevity and differences of conditions necessitate caution in applying outside experience.

In the United Kingdom the revival of Celtic tongues has made it necessary for the school authorities to face the question. Passing over the rapid growth of Gaelic in Ireland, where it is now a subject of study in five thousand out of eight thousand elementary schools, and the less marked revival in Scotland, the situation in Wales may be stated. When a system of state-aided schools was first established in England and in Wales, which for nearly all purposes is considered a part of the same administrative unit, English was made the sole language of instruction and Welsh was barred under penalty.¹¹ With the steady growth of Welsh nationalist feeling in the nineteenth century, and the endeavors made to preserve the ancient tongue, especially in Sunday Schools, it became necessary to make concessions. At first Welsh was admitted as a subject of study and, in a very limited degree, as the language of instruction. The Royal Commission on Education, 1886-

¹¹"The idea is that if you shut Welsh out of the school-room and the playground, you are in that way likely to teach English better. There is a plan by which if a boy is heard to speak a word of Welsh, a piece of stick or board is taken out of the master's desk, with the letters W.N. on it, meaning 'Welsh Note'. This is handed to the child, and the meaning of that is that the child, if he has it in his possession at the close of the school, is to be punished. This child is not now thinking of the lesson; he is very anxious to find somebody who speaks Welsh, in order to hand the W.N. on to him, so he attends to right and left, to somebody before or behind him who is likely to speak Welsh and as soon as he hears a Welsh word he hands it over and that goes on and at last the final culprit is brought up and punished."

Reference 5, p. 13.

"Mr. Lloyd George told me, this summer, that he could still feel his fingers tingle with the strokes of the rod which he had received at school when he dared to utter the words of the blessed tongue he had learned from his mother."

Reference 9, p. 37.

1887, reported in favour of further extension; bilingual readers were authorized in 1889, and since 1893 a thorough-going bilingual system has been in force in Wales, and in the County of Monmouth. In the primary classes, English and Welsh children are given instruction wholly in their mother tongue; Welsh is retained as a subject of study throughout. The Welsh authorities speak in the highest terms of the educational results achieved.¹²

Of the Dominions, South Africa presents the nearest analogy to Canada in the language situation. In accordance with the report of a Select Committee of the Union Parliament, English and Dutch, which had both been made official languages for legislative purposes, were put on an equality throughout in the schools. Up to the fourth standard, instruction is given in and through the home language, though parents may require that the instruction be given in the second language as a subject of study, and as an auxiliary medium of instruction. Above this Standard, equal provision is made for the use of both languages, both as subjects of study and as mediums of instruction. All teachers in future are required to have a knowledge of both languages. Elaborate administrative provisions have been drawn up to facilitate this difficult and complicated programme.¹³

Belgium is a country of two races and two languages, under a single administration, presenting same analogies to the Province of Canada from 1841 to 1867. A line drawn from Lille to Maastricht divides Belgium into the Flemish or Low German section to the north-west and the Walloon or French section to the south-east, nearly equal in population.¹⁴ The language question has been a source of constant conflict between Flemish and Walloon Belgium. Under the Dutch re-

¹²Reference 21.

¹³Reference 21.

¹⁴1900 language census of Belgium:

Number speaking French only	2,574,805
Number speaking Flemish only	2,822,005
Number speaking German only	28,314
Number speaking French and Flemish.....	801,587
Number speaking French and German.....	66,447
Number speaking Flemish and German.....	7,238
Number speaking the three languages.....	42,889

gime, 1815-1830, Dutch was made the official language; when Belgium secured its freedom French took its place as the sole language of the administration, the courts and the army. It was hoped that Flanders could be made French-speaking. The hope was vain; step by step the Flemish have forced almost complete equality for their tongue, in the courts, in the army, and in the proceedings of parliament. The Catholic party, suspicious of anti-clerical France, has favoured this 'flamingant' movement. In the elementary schools, the mother tongue, as determined by the head of the family, is the language of instruction throughout; in the Brussels district and along the linguistic frontier, modifications of this rule are permitted, subject to insistence on adequate study of the mother tongue. In the middle schools the mother tongue is compulsory, and also a second language, such as French in Flemish or German districts and Flemish or German in Walloon districts, while a third modern language is optional; in the Athénées Royaux, or state-supported secondary schools, French is required for entrance in all cases, and Flemish or German where those languages prevail. In the universities the lectures are given in French, except in special cases decided by the Minister of Education.¹⁵ It is significant that the German occupiers of Belgium, seeking to drive a wedge between Fleming and Walloon, in 1916 made the University of Ghent Flemish throughout. It may be noted, in passing, that it is perhaps unfortunate that the impressions our soldiers have formed of the Belgian people have been gathered almost wholly by contact with the Flemish section,—the Walloon section being as yet, wholly under German occupation.

Germany is a land of many dialects but of few distinct languages. Prussia has endeavoured to make them fewer. Since 1889 German has been substituted for Danish in the schools of North Schleswig. In 1873 the Prussian government decreed that in Polish districts German should be made the language of instruction save for religious teaching; even this exception was abolished later, resulting in school strikes on an extraordinary scale. "The experiments made before adopting exclusively the German language in schools made up of foreigners (!) were most interesting," writes an American ob-

¹⁵Reference 22.

server. "The Minister of Public Instruction conducted these experiments in person. It was everywhere found that children who had not spoken a single German word before entering school not only made great progress in the elementary school curriculum when the instruction was given in German, but also expressed themselves best in their native tongue."¹⁶ In 1899 a Prussian decree forbade German teachers and officials imported into Polish districts, who had married Polish wives, to use Polish in the family circle. Gratuitous private instructions in Polish is punished by fine or imprisonment. Polish is barred from the courts and all administrative dealings. Yet the policy of Germanisation has completely failed. Polish Prussia before the war was becoming more intensely Polish and anti-German every year.¹⁷

In Alsace-Lorraine a less extreme policy has been adopted. "About four hundred primary schools are classified as French or Bilingual schols. In every school where twenty per cent of the pupils speak French, a division is made. If fewer than half of the pupils speak French, they are taught to read and write German from the first year, but they are nevertheless given five hours French teaching a week for the first two years. If the majority speak French, they are taught at first to read and write in French. Seven hours a week are set aside for instruction in French, in the strict sense, during the first two years, for children of six and seven; three hours for children of eight and nine, and two hours for children from ten to fourteen. In all the schools, the instruction in religion is given in the mother tongue four hours a week."¹⁸

Austria-Hungary is the classic example of a land of conflicting races and tongues. In the Austrian section of the dual monarchy, the German language has lost its earlier primacy. It remains the language of command in the army, though the various Slav tongues are recognized as regimental languages of instruction. In the Reichsrat, eight tongues are recognized as official languages. The struggle has been keenest in Bohemia. The policy of making Bohemia German and Catholic, pursued since Maria Theresa's day, has proved futile; after

¹⁶Reference 23, p. 16.

¹⁷Reference 24.

¹⁸Reference 9, p. 41.

long years of oblivion, Bohemian has revived and dominates two-thirds of the country. Since 1895 Bohemian has been recognized as an official language, along with German. Where Bohemians are in the majority, both German and Bohemian schools are provided; where Germans are in the majority, only German schools. In the latter districts Bohemian schools are often provided by voluntary subscription, through the Mother of Schools Association.¹⁹

In Hungary the Magyars have been more strict and more successful in their attempt to make their tongue universal. Magyar has ousted German, which in turn had ousted Latin, the medieval *lingua franca* of Hungary. It has not fared so well against the Slav and Rumanian tongues. In 1879 Magyar was made a compulsory subject of study in all schools in Hungary, and teachers were required to know Magyar; the language of the locality was, however, to remain the medium of instruction. The law was not fully enforced: in 1905 it was shown that in one-fourth of the schools, and especially in the Rumanian districts, Magyar was an unknown tongue. In 1907 it was decreed that where at least half the scholars were Magyar, Magyar should be the medium of instruction, but that steps might also be taken to give the non-Magyars instruction in their own tongue. In schools in which the language of instruction is not Magyar, Magyar is to be a daily subject of study, with a view to enabling the children to express themselves in the official language of the state both in speech and in writing at the end of the fourth year of instruction.²⁰

The United States, we are accustomed to think, recognizes no language but English in its schools. This is not quite correct. In the public elementary schools, English is now practically the sole language of instruction. This has not always been so; until a few years ago German, Spanish and French were frequently used; Colorado still permits instruction in the German or Spanish language, where demanded by the parents of twenty children, and in Louisiana the law of 1906 provides that "elementary branches may also be taught in the French language in these localities where the French language is spoken; but no additional expense shall be incurred for this

¹⁹Reference 25.

²⁰Reference 26.

cause." In spite of this permission, there is today no instruction in French in the public elementary schools of Louisiana except in New Orleans, where it is taught after hours in fifteen schools.²¹ In the public high schools, French, German and Spanish are, as elsewhere, subjects of study. Further, even in the public elementary schools in many large cities these languages are included in the list of subjects of study, while Minnesota permits instruction in any language other than English, not to exceed an hour a day, by unanimous vote of the trustees. This practice appears to be decreasing. In Cleveland, for example, where German was formerly taught from the first year, it is now taught only in the seventh and eighth grades (the Fourth Book); the Educational Commission of 1906 declared that those "who begin German in the High School, after the second year, can keep up with and do as good work in the same classes as those who have had eight years of German in the primary and grammar grades, and two years in the high schools."²²

The public schools, however, are not the only elementary schools in the United States. Our American cousins have steadily refused to establish separate schools in our sense of the term, that is, schools giving religious instruction and supported by the taxes of members of certain denominations, who are thereby exempted from support of the public schools. But there have grown up great numbers of parochial schools, supported by the voluntary contributions of religious or nationalistic groups, who must also pay their share of public school taxes. Catholic parochial schools are found in every diocese, and in 1913 enrolled 1,360,761 pupils, involving an outlay of \$11,000,000; Catholic High Schools are numerous and growing. Lutheran parochial or congregational schools in the same year numbered 5,883, with 272,914 pupils enrolled or about one-fifth of the Lutheran children of school age. A few other denominations sustain a small number of schools.²³

In these parochial schools, which stand entirely outside the state system, the religious authorities have been free to teach what and how they pleased. In non-English speaking com-

²¹Reference 30, chap. 4, 9.

²²Reference 27, p. 94-5.

²³Reference 29.

munities, the schools are frequently carried on in whole or in part in the speech of the neighborhood. In the second generation English usually becomes the school tongue. "Even in German schools," according to an official report, "English is the language used by teachers and pupils in nine-tenths of the studies pursued. Even in religious study, which forms the *raison d'être* of these schools, the use of English as the medium of instruction is increasing, as the German or Norwegian, Swedish, etc., congregations are becoming English."²⁴ In Cleveland, as an example, there are fifteen Lutheran schools, one Slovak and the rest German; in the latter, German is taught one and a quarter hours a day through the eight days. "All the pupils are able to read, write and speak German easily when they graduate." Of the 52 Catholic parochial schools, 30 are foreign language schools, Polish, German, Bohemian, Slovak, Slovenian, Hungarian, and Lithuanian. "The Church itself has no particular enthusiasm for these foreign language schools, enduring rather than fostering them." In addition, the Bohemians, who are chiefly free thinkers, maintain five Saturday and Sunday schools for instruction in Bohemian language and history, and Hebrews, Protestant and Catholic Hungarians, Ruthenians, Serbians and Slovaks maintain similar Saturday, Sunday, evening or summer schools.²⁵ In the Roman Catholic Schools of Cleveland English is the only language of instruction: "in some schools in the entering grades a teacher is employed who also speaks the native language of the children. English, however, is begun at once, and the other language is used only as a means of introduction to English. With us a two-language school means that the language and history of the fatherland are taught as an accomplishment and generally are begun the third year of the child's school life." In the diocese of Newark, again, no language but English is used as a medium of instruction. In Philadelphia, out of 162 Roman Catholic parish schools, 55 are bilingual, 25 German, 16 Polish, 6 Italian, 4 Slav and 1 Lithuanian. The Polish schools, as a rule, divide the school session equally between English and Polish studies; so in one Italian school, while all the other bilingual schools are content with one

²⁴Reference 29, p. 397.

²⁵Reference 28, pp. 31-54.

or two hours of the foreign language daily. In the Slav, Polish and Lithuanian schools, and in a slight degree in the Italian schools, the native tongue is used during the first year only, as a medium of instruction; in the German schools even the beginners understand English.²⁶

O. D. SKELTON.

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